



Mesa Police Department Media Relations Office

*For Release: January 14, 2016
Contact: Detective Esteban Flores
Public Information Officer
pd-info@mesaaz.gov
480-644-4133 Tel.*

News Release

Child Prostitution Arrests

On 1/7/2016 the Mesa Police Department conducted Operation "Red Zone." The operation was conducted by undercover detectives posing as underage females. During the operation, nine suspects responded to the designated location to pay for sex with who they believed was a 16-year-old female. This operation demonstrates the commitment the Mesa Police Department has to stop child prostitution and end human trafficking.

The suspects who were arrested range in age from 20 to 67-years-old. The suspects made arrangements to meet with undercover officers posing as 16-year-olds and were arrested after arriving at the agreed upon location. All nine suspects were charged with Child Prostitution, a Class 2 Felony.

Crimes involving children are of the highest priority for us here at the Mesa Police Department. We are dedicated to these types of operations, because they have shown time and again to be successful in removing dangerous child predators from our community. This has become such a priority to us, that we have now established a dedicated team of detectives to combat these crimes. This team will send a message to those who choose to engage in this type of activity.

All of these suspects were booked for the above mentioned felony charges:

Ignacio Villaverde/5-26-1995

Samuel Garcia/8-18-1984

Carlos Herrera-Fernandez/12-1-1981

Murphy Yazzy/4-13-1977

Kenneth Lenhard/12-19-1948

Joseph Ligue/12-19-1975

Daryoush Khetounabadi/12-15-1960

Mengyun Zhang/4-18-89

Monte Smith/8-8-1953



**Mesa Police Department
Media Relations Office**

